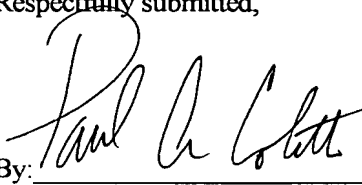


Series No. 09/609,163

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

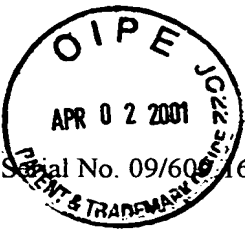
Respectfully submitted,



By: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dated: March 29, 2001



**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

**In the Claims:**

— 33. (New) A stent in the form of a generally tubular structure having a circumference about the longitudinal axis, the stent comprising:

a plurality of circumferential sets of strut members that extend in a generally, ring-like pattern about the stent's circumference; and

a plurality of flexible links each having a distal end and a proximal end and a line joining the distal end and the proximal end being generally parallel to the stent's longitudinal axis, each flexible link being fixedly attached to two adjacent circumferential sets of strut members and each flexible link being a generally longitudinally extending flexible structure having at least five generally longitudinally extending curved segments in series connected by a plurality of segments of approximately equal length.

34. (New) A flexible link for enhancing the flexibility of an intravascular stent, the flexible link being a generally longitudinally extending flexible structure having at least five generally longitudinally extending curved segments in series and connected by a plurality of generally curved segments of approximately equal length.

35. (New) The flexible link of claim 34 wherein the link is formed in the shape of a letter "M".

36. (New) The flexible link of claim 34 wherein the link is formed in the shape of a letter "W".

37. (New) The flexible link of claim 34 wherein the link is formed from stainless steel.

38. (New) The flexible link of claim 33 wherein the link is formed in the shape of a letter "M".

39. (New) The flexible link of claim 33 wherein the link is formed in the shape of a letter "W".

40. (New) The flexible link of claim 33 wherein the link is formed from stainless steel.

41. (New) A stent in the form of a generally tubular structure having a longitudinal axis, the stent comprising:

a plurality of circumferential sets of strut members that extend in a generally circumferential, ring-like pattern around the stent's longitudinal axis; and

a plurality of flexible links each having a distal end and a proximal end and a line joining the distal end and the proximal end being generally parallel to the stent's longitudinal axis, each flexible link being fixedly attached to two adjacent circumferential sets of strut members and each flexible link being a generally longitudinally extending flexible structure having five generally longitudinally extending curved segments that are connected together by four generally circumferentially extending segments of approximately equal length.

42. (New) A flexible link for enhancing the flexibility of an intravascular stent, the flexible link being a generally longitudinally extending flexible structure having five generally longitudinally extending curved segments that are connected together by four generally circumferentially extending segments of approximately equal length.

43. (New) The flexible link of claim 42 wherein the link is an "M" link.

44. (New) The flexible link of claim 42 wherein the link is an "W" link.

45. (New) The flexible link of claim 42 wherein the link is formed from stainless steel.

46. (New) The flexible link of claim 41 wherein the link is an "M" link.

47. (New) The flexible link of claim 41 wherein the link is an "W" link.

48. (New) The flexible link of claim 41 wherein the link is formed from stainless steel.

49. (New) A flexible link for enhancing the flexibility of an intravascular stent, the flexible link being a generally longitudinally extending flexible structure having at least three generally longitudinally extending curved segments in series connected by a plurality of segments of approximately equal length.